

Mammals of Greatest Conservation Need



District of Columbia

Mammal Fact Sheet

Eastern Small-Footed Myotis *Myotis leibii*



STATUS: Fairly widespread in southeastern Canada and eastern United States, but very spotted in distribution and rarely found in large numbers. Critically imperiled within the District of Columbia.

RANGE: Found from southern Ontario and northeastern United States to Maine south through Appalachian with isolated populations in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, and Kentucky.

LOCAL HABITAT: Further monitoring needed to determine current range within the District of Columbia.

SPECIES ECOLOGY: The small-footed myotis occur in mountainous regions at elevations ranging from 240-1125m. They prefer eastern deciduous and coniferous forests and can roost in buildings, rock bluffs and turnpike tunnels. Mating occurs in autumn and sperm is stored in the female until fertilization in the spring. Females give birth to a single young between late May and July. Little is known of their feeding habits although they appear to be insectivores. Favorite prey includes small insects such as flies, beetles, and moths.

THREATS: This species is most vulnerable during hibernation. Destruction of roost and foraging habitat, and pollution or siltation of waterway, and declines in insect production are all additional potential threats to this species.

CONSERVATION ACTION: Public education on the nature and value of bats is urgently needed. Identification of foraging areas and protection from pesticides and other poisons must a priority. Status surveys are needed.

SITE MAP: 2

REFERENCES: 1 – 5

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Mammal Fact Sheet

Gray Fox

Urocyon cinereoargenteus



STATUS: Widespread healthy populations are present in most areas where the species occurs. Vulnerable within the District of Columbia.

RANGE: Extreme southern Canada throughout the United States, except in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and most of Washington. It ranges into Mexico and Central America.

LOCAL HABITAT: Rock Creek National Park and the Fort Circle Parks area.

SPECIES ECOLOGY: Gray foxes prefer mixed woodlands and pastures; dens in hollow trees, logs, thickets, or underground burrows. Rough, hilly terrain near streams and lakes provide ideal habitat for the gray fox. They mate for life; breed from January through May; gestation 51-63 days; one litter per year; 3 -4 pups per litter; raised by both parents. They are omnivorous and will eat almost anything it comes across: mice, rats, grasshoppers, crickets, eggs, birds, acorns, berries, and apples.

THREATS: Major factors governing population of gray fox are food and cover. It is also subject to epizootics of rabies.

CONSERVATION ACTION: Additional surveys are needed to determine the distribution, habitat requirements, and life cycle of this species within the District. Adequate quality habitat should be maintained, and the population should be monitored.

SITE MAP: 1, 2, 6, 8

REFERENCES: 1 - 7

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Northern River Otter *Lutra canadensis*



STATUS: The river otter has a large range, but has been virtually eliminated through many parts of its range. Recent reintroductions and management efforts have improved the species' conservation status. Critically imperiled within the District of Columbia.

RANGE: All of the United States and Canada except the tundra and parts of the arid southwestern United States.

LOCAL HABITAT: Further monitoring needed to determine current range within the District of Columbia.

SPECIES ECOLOGY: The northern river otter primarily inhabits wooded shoreline areas of lakes, ponds, rivers and streams with waters rich in fish. They rarely frequent polluted waters or areas of high human population. Females mate in the spring shortly after giving birth to two to four young (or they might skip a year). The new litter of youngsters will not begin to develop until late in the fall. Their diet consists of fish, crayfish, frogs, clams, muskrats, turtles, birds, small rodents and young rabbits.

THREATS: Since this species rarely frequents polluted waters or areas of high human population density, human encroachment and pollution have made some habitats unsuitable.

CONSERVATION ACTION: Little is known of the relative abundance and distribution of this species within the District. Additional surveys are needed to determine the distribution, habitat requirements, and life cycle of this species within the District. Maintaining water quality and suitable habitat within the District's major rivers, streams, and wetlands would benefit this otter species.

SITE MAP: 1, 3, 7, 9,

REFERENCES: 1 - 4



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Southern Bog Lemming *Synaptomys cooperi*



STATUS: This species is patchily distributed throughout its geographical range. Populations are usually scared and scattered, and this is thought to be due to competition with meadow voles. Vulnerable within the District of Columbia.

RANGE: From New Brunswick and Nova Scotia south along the Atlantic Coast to Virginia and in the Appalachian Mountains to western North Carolina. It occurs westward to western Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, western Minnesota, and eastern Manitoba.

LOCAL HABITAT: Further monitoring needed to determine current range within the District of Columbia.

SPECIES ECOLOGY: Southern bog lemmings occurs mainly in sphagnum bogs, as its common name suggests, but it may also occur in grasslands, and in Canada it occurs in coniferous or deciduous forests. They typically breed from February to November. Several litters may be produced each year. Litter sizes range from one to eight, although three to four is the usual size. They eat mostly vegetation such as grasses, sedges, mosses, fruits, fungi, bark and roots, some invertebrates such as slugs and snails are also taken.

THREATS: Habitat destruction and the overgrowth of bogs.

CONSERVATION ACTION: Developing and maintaining brackish and freshwater marshes would benefit this species, as would maintaining early stages of ecological succession in grasslands. Additional surveys are needed to determine the distribution, habitat requirements, and life cycle of this species within the District.

SITE MAP: 1, 2, 3, 7, 9

REFERENCES: 1 - 4



District of Columbia

Mammal Fact Sheet

Southern Flying Squirrel *Glaucomys volans*



STATUS: The southern flying squirrel is common throughout most of its range within the United States. Secure within the District of Columbia.

RANGE: Occurs in Mexico and from the Gulf of Mexico through the eastern United States to the Great Lakes also in southern Ontario, southwestern Quebec and southern Nova Scotia. Resident in the District of Columbia.

LOCAL HABITAT: Further monitoring needed to determine current range within the District of Columbia.

SPECIES ECOLOGY: Southern flying squirrels inhabit hardwood forests in eastern North America. Dead hollow trees are used as den sites. They usually have two litters a year, the first between April and early June, and the second between July and September. Litters contain 1 to 7 young. They eat a variety of different foods such as berries, fruits, acorns, and nuts as well as insects, nesting birds and eggs, and the flesh of dead animals.

THREATS: Loss and degradation of habitat are the main factors limiting populations and forest fragmentation has reduced habitat area. Populations are also limited by competition for food with grey squirrels.

CONSERVATION ACTION: Enhancing and maintaining appropriate hardwood habitat allows for the continued existence of healthy populations. Additional surveys are needed to determine the distribution, habitat requirements, and life cycle of this species within the District.

SITE MAP: 2

REFERENCES: 1 - 3

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Virginia Opossum *Didelphis Virginiana*



STATUS: The Virginia opossum is represented by many and/or large occurrences throughout most of its range. Secure within the District of Columbia.

RANGE: United States east of the Rocky Mountains, and along the coast west of the Rockies from British Columbia, Canada into Mexico and Central America as far south as Costa Rica.

LOCAL HABITAT: Rock Creek National Park, Kenilworth Park, and Fort Circle Parks area.

SPECIES ECOLOGY: The Virginia opossum is terrestrial and arboreal. It lives in virtually all areas, but prefers wooded land. They are solitary creatures and come together only to breed. Breeding season starts in late winter. Females will have two or three litters each year with up to 13 young per litter. They are opportunistic feeders, eating fruits, vegetables, insects, snails, slugs, worms, rats, mice, shrews, moles, amphibians, snakes, eggs, fish, crayfish, and carrion.

THREATS: Their greatest threats include cars, domesticated pets, and humans.

CONSERVATION ACTION: Additional surveys are needed to determine the distribution, habitat requirements, and life cycle of this species within the District.

SITE MAP: 1, 3, 7, 9

REFERENCES: 1 - 4

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Allegheny Woodrat *Neotoma magister*



STATUS: Populations in the northeastern United States have declined. Possibly extirpated within the District of Columbia.

RANGE: Southeastern New York southwest through much of Pennsylvania, extreme southern Ohio and Indiana, through western Maryland, all of West Virginia, most of Kentucky, and the western reaches of Virginia and North Carolina south through much of Tennessee, and into northern Alabama and most of northwestern Georgia.

LOCAL HABITAT: Further monitoring needed to determine current range within the District of Columbia.

SPECIES ECOLOGY: The preferred habitat for the Allegheny woodrat is rocky areas in deciduous forests but they are most often found in caves and rocky cliffs. They also are found in wooded bottomlands, swamps, and in outbuildings and abandoned structures. They breed from late winter to late summer. Females may have two to three litters per year, averaging two young in each litter. Their diet includes buds, leaves, stems, fruits, seeds, acorns and other nuts.

THREATS: Several factors may be contributing to the population decline, such as: 1) severe winter weather, 2) a decline in acorns due to defoliation of oak trees by gypsy moths which reduces winter food supply, 3) parasitic raccoon roundworm infection, 4) human disturbance and 5) habitat loss or alteration.

CONSERVATION ACTION: Additional surveys are needed to confirm presence and to subsequently determine the distribution, habitat requirements, and life cycle of this species within the District.

SITE MAP: 2, 6

REFERENCES: 1 - 5



District of Columbia

Mammal Fact Sheet

American Mink *Mustela vison*



STATUS: The American mink has a large range in North America, and despite local declines. It is secure in many areas, but critically imperiled with the District of Columbia.

RANGE: Found throughout the United States, appearing in parts of every state except Arizona and they are also present in most of Canada.

LOCAL HABITAT: Further monitoring needed to determine current range within the District of Columbia.

SPECIES ECOLOGY: Minks tend to frequent forested areas that are in close proximity to water. Streams, ponds, and lakes, with some sort of brushy or rocky cover nearby are considered optimal territory. The breeding season begins in late February, and mating occurs until early April. A single annual litter of four or five young is born around the first of May. They prey on mice, rabbits and other terrestrial animals they also eat fish, crayfish and other aquatic animals.

THREATS: The main threat within the District is destruction of habitat. The mink depends heavily on aquatic ecosystems. Stream channelization and erosion are major habitat threats that cause the declines in mink populations.

CONSERVATION ACTION: Creating, enhancing, and maintaining appropriate stream and wetland habitat. Additional surveys are needed to determine the distribution, habitat requirements, and life cycle of this species within the District.

SITE MAP: 1, 3, 7, 9

REFERENCES: 1 - 6



District of Columbia

Mammal Fact Sheet

Eastern Chipmunk *Tamias striatus*



STATUS: The eastern chipmunk is represented by many and/or large occurrences throughout most of its range. Secure within the District of Columbia.

RANGE: Southeastern Canada and northeastern U.S. east from North Dakota and east Oklahoma, and south to Mississippi, northwest South Carolina, and Virginia.

LOCAL HABITAT: Rock Creek National Park and the Fort Circle Parks area.

SPECIES ECOLOGY: Eastern chipmunks prefer deciduous woodlands, forest edges, and brushy areas. They can also be found in bushes and stonewalls in cemeteries as well as in and around suburban and rural homes with woodlot edges. They mate in early spring producing one litter per year of 3–5 young that are born in May. Their diets consist primarily of grains, nuts, berries, seeds, mushrooms, insects, and salamanders, but they also prey on young birds and their eggs.

THREATS: This species is may be negatively affected by forest fragmentation, possibly through increased rates of predation. The biggest threat in suburban areas is the house cat.

CONSERVATION ACTION: A comprehensive campaign to encourage owners to keep cat indoors would benefit this species within the District.

SITE MAP: 2, 6, 8

REFERENCES: 1 - 6

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Eastern Cottontail *Sylvilagus floridanus*



U.S. Fish and Wildlife

STATUS: The eastern cottontail is represented by many and/or large occurrences throughout most of its range. Secure within the District of Columbia.

RANGE: The eastern cottontail can be found in most of the eastern United States except for New England.

LOCAL HABITAT: Rock Creek National Park, Kenilworth Park, and Fort Circle Parks area.

SPECIES ECOLOGY: The eastern cottontail prefers habitats that are between woody areas and open land. It can be found in bushy areas, fields, woodlands, swamps and thickets. It mates between February and September. The female gives birth about a month after mating and produces between one to nine young, but the average litter size is four to five young. It eats a variety of different plants including grasses, clover, fruits and vegetables. In the winter it eats the woody parts of plants like the twigs and the bark of brambles, birch, oak, dogwood and maple trees.

THREATS: Even though secure on a global and regional scale, this species is restricted to fairly small habitat areas within the District that are constantly under threat from ongoing urbanization.

CONSERVATION ACTION: Additional surveys are needed to determine the distribution, habitat requirements, and life cycle of this species to keep it abundant and common in the District. Adequate quality habitat should be ensured, and the population should be monitored.

SITE MAP: 4

REFERENCES: 1 - 3

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Mammal Fact Sheet

Eastern Red Bat *Lasiurus borealis*



STATUS: The eastern red bat is North America's most abundant "tree bat." Apparently secure within the District of Columbia.

RANGE: Widespread across much of North America from southern Canada, south through Central America to northern South America; absent only from the Rocky Mountains and southern Florida.

LOCAL HABITAT: Further monitoring needed to determine current range within the District of Columbia.

SPECIES ECOLOGY: Eastern red bats inhabit forests, roosting primarily beneath clusters of leaves during spring, summer and fall. They prefer forested areas, wooded hedgerows, and areas with large shade trees (e.g., city parks). They are rarely if ever observed in caves. Mating occurs in flight during the months of August and September. Young are born in late May through June with an average litter size between 2 - 4 pups. They consume predominantly moths.

THREATS: Even though secure on a global and regional scale, this species is restricted to fairly small habitat areas within the District that are constantly under threat from ongoing urbanization.

CONSERVATION ACTION: Additional surveys are needed to determine the distribution, habitat requirements, and life cycle of this species in the District. If the species is located, sites should be acquired or protected, high levels of habitat quality should be ensured, and the population should be monitored.

SITE MAP: 2, 8

REFERENCES: 1 – 5